

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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JUSTIFY GALLOPS 1 1/2 MILES SATURDAY AT CHURCHILL DOWNS; HALL OF FAME TRAINER BAFFERT TO RETURN MONDAY

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, May 26, 2018) – Kentucky Derby (Grade I) and Preakness (GI) winner **Justify** galloped 1 1/2 miles Saturday morning at Churchill Downs with **Humberto Gomez** in the saddle as the undefeated colt continued preparing for the June 9 Belmont Stakes (GI).

“I couldn’t be happier with the way things are going,” Hall of Fame trainer **Bob Baffert**’s assistant **Jimmy Barnes** said. “Once again Bob told me to take it easy with him but he’s doing really well. We backed him up a little further in the stretch to begin his gallop this morning and went a good 1 1/2 miles.”

Baffert is expected to return to Churchill Downs on Monday morning to watch Justify train.

Barnes, 58, has worked as Baffert’s assistant for nearly 20 years and oversees the development of the barn’s top horses including Triple Crown winner **American Pharoah** and champion **Arrogate**.

“You have to get Bob a lot of credit,” Barnes said. “He’s stocked the pond well every year. You have to have the horse and the horsepower to compete in these classic races. We keep coming up with them and are very lucky. You do have to pinch yourself because you don’t know if you will have it every year.”

Also training Saturday during the exclusive 7:30-7:40 a.m. (all times Eastern) training window for Belmont Stakes horses were Preakness runner-up **Bravazo**, who galloped 1 1/2 miles with exercise rider **Danielle Rosier** aboard for Hall of Fame trainer **D. Wayne Lukas**, and Preakness third **Tenfold**, who galloped about 1 1/2 miles with **Angel Garcia** for fellow Hall of Fame conditioner **Steve Asmussen**.

Other Belmont Stakes possible contenders based at Churchill Downs are **Albaugh Family Stables**’ Breeders’ Futurity (GI) winner **Free Drop Billy** and Wood Memorial (GI) third **Restoring Hope**.

Free Drop Billy is scheduled to breeze Sunday and his Belmont Stakes status could be determined after the work, according to trainer **Dale Romans**. Restoring Hope could breeze while Baffert is at Churchill Downs on Monday or Tuesday, according to Barnes.

The Belmont Stakes field could possibly be comprised of the following 11 horses (with trainer): **Bandua** (Dermot Weld), **Blended Citizen** (Doug O’Neill), Bravazo (D. Wayne Lukas), **Free Drop Billy** (Dale Romans), **Gronkowski** (Chad Brown), **Hofburg** (Bill Mott), Justify (Baffert), **Noble Indy** (Todd Pletcher), **Restoring Hope** (Baffert), Tenfold (Steve Asmussen) and **Vino Rosso** (Pletcher).

Only 12 horses have swept the Triple Crown: **Sir Barton** (1919), **Gallant Fox** (1930), **Omaha** (1935), **War Admiral** (1937), **Whirlaway** (1941), **Count Fleet** (1943), **Assault** (1946), **Citation** (1948), **Secretariat** (1973), **Seattle Slew** (1977), **Affirmed** (1978) and **American Pharoah** (2015).

To watch Justify’s gallop Saturday morning: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edhR_5LqVoU

For complementary past performances of the Belmont Stakes contenders courtesy of Brisnet.com: <http://www.brisnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/BelmontStakes18.pdf>.

Sunday’s exclusive training period at Churchill Downs also will feature Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) winner **Monomoy Girl**, who is scheduled to breeze in company with jockey **Florent Geroux** aboard. She is preparing for a start in the Grade I, \$700,000 Acorn at one mile on the Belmont Stakes undercard.

FANS CAN WATCH JUSTIFY TRAIN IN PERSON OR ONLINE – With unbeaten Triple Crown hopeful **Justify** and four other possible Belmont Stakes contenders stabled on the grounds, Churchill Downs Racetrack is conducting a special 7:30-7:40 a.m. (all times Eastern) training period for those horses.

Area horse racing fans are invited to watch those colts train from the first floor of the facility free of charge. Churchill Downs Racetrack will open its Paddock Gate entrance between 7-8 a.m. each morning through Monday, June 4 so the public can watch Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner Justify along with rivals **Bravazo**, **Free Drop Billy**, **Restoring Hope** and **Tenfold** prepare for the 1 1/2-mile third jewel of horse racing’s Triple Crown – the 150th running of the \$1.5 million Belmont Stakes (Grade I) on Saturday, June 9.

Guests may park free of charge in the Orange and Black Lots outside of the Paddock Gate.

Video of the exercises will be shown on the Big Board and infield video screens at Churchill Downs. Those unable to attend can watch an online live stream of the daily exercises with commentary on the Kentucky Derby Facebook (www.facebook.com/KentuckyDerby), Twitter (www.twitter.com/kentuckyderby) and at www.KentuckyDerby.com/Works from 7:20-7:45 a.m. through Monday, June 4, thanks to **TwinSpires.com**, the country's leading online and mobile betting platform and official betting partner of Churchill Downs, the Kentucky Derby and Breeders' Cup World Championships. Also, clips of the activity will be uploaded on the Kentucky Derby YouTube channel.

TOMLINSON BARN REMAINS HOT WITH FRIDAY DOUBLE AT CHURCHILL DOWNS – It has been nearly impossible to wipe the smile off trainer **Mike Tomlinson**'s face the last two weeks after the Oklahoma native reeled off eight victories through 19 starters to begin the 38-day Spring Meet at Churchill Downs.

“We’re extremely fortunate to have the start we’ve had,” Tomlinson said. “I knew I had some bullets to fire with to start the meet and we hope that the holster isn’t running out.”

Tomlinson recorded two wins in three starts on Friday’s card: **4M Racing**’s **Lucky Britches** (\$12.80) defeated a field of seven by a nose in Race 3 and **Carol Staley**’s **Dagney’s Warrior** (\$16.40) won Race 8 by a neck.

The barn has a positive ROI of \$7.40 and is tied for third-place in the trainer standings with **Ian Wilkes**, behind **Steve Asmussen** (10 wins) and **Kenny McPeek** (nine wins).

Tomlinson began training in Kentucky in the early 1990s and now resides in Shelbyville, Ky. with his wife **Vicki**, who oversees the horsemen’s relations at Churchill Downs.

“I grew up around racehorses in Oklahoma, primarily seeing it as a breeding operation with my father,” Tomlinson said. “Back then there was no pari-mutuel wagering. So, we just had the bush tracks and if it had four legs, he’d race it. I grew up training different breeds of horses throughout my life. My first trip to Kentucky was in 1993 and I came to Ellis Park from Remington Park, in Oklahoma, and spent a summer there. I did pretty well so I came back the next summer and was tied with **David Vance** for the leading trainer coming into the last race and he beat me by less than a length. I had to give his horse seven pounds in a two-mile starter allowance. Dave is one of my close friends and we laugh about that a lot except he gets to laugh a little louder than I do. I met so many good people then in Kentucky and decided to move here from Oklahoma.”

Tomlinson currently has a string of horses based at Churchill Downs and Trackside Louisville, located about five miles from the main track.

“We’ve been blessed to have so many great people work with us at the barn that are basically family,” Vicki Tomlinson said. “Mike and I pride ourselves in living by our faith and we have some great people on our team.”

Assistant **D.W. Fries** started working for Tomlinson in the late 1990s and helps oversee his string of about 25 horses at Churchill Downs while assistant **Billy Lawson** is based at Trackside Louisville with a barn of about 15 horses.

DOWN THE STRETCH – Racing continues Saturday at Churchill Downs with a nine-race program that gets underway at 12:45 p.m. (all times Eastern). Saturday’s card is highlighted by a \$484,060 carryover in the 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot that begins in Race 6 with a scheduled post time of 3:18 p.m. Also, there is a \$6,645 carryover in the \$1 Super Hi-5 in Race 11 at 5:58 p.m. ... Racing continues through Monday this week at Churchill Downs with a 12:45 p.m. first post each day. In honor of Memorial Day on Monday, all active and retired members of the United States armed forces will be admitted free of charge. Also, Churchill Downs’ bugler **Steve Buttleman** will perform patriotic melodies following the “Call to the Post” for each race. ... The podcast of “**Inside Churchill Downs**” featuring Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert’s assistant Jimmy Barnes and locally-based conditioner Brad Cox is available at <https://omny.fm/shows/additional-programming-0/inside-churchilldowns-w-johnasher-derbymedia-hor-3>. The one-hour horse racing radio show is co-hosted by Churchill Downs Racetrack’s **John Asher**, **Darren Rogers** and **Kevin Kerstein** and airs every Friday at 6 p.m. Those outside the Louisville radio market can listen live online at <http://www.espnlouisville.com/> or via podcast on the station’s website or <https://soundcloud.com/>.

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